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ABSTRACT

Three presentations are provided from Symposium 17, Transformative Learning, of the Academy of Human Resource Development (HRD) 2000 Conference Proceedings. "Leadership Development as Transformative Pedagogy" (Olga V. Kritskaya, John M. Dirkx) examines the nature of transformative instructional environments, focusing specifically on the dynamic interplay among the teachers' beliefs, learners' experiences, content, and instructional methods. Findings suggest five themes that characterize the instructional environments studied, in which participants construct, through myths, rituals, imagination, and creativity, a "metatext" that mediates the inner work of leadership development. "The Added Dimension: Using the Learning and Change Model as a Means for Understanding Professionals' Performance" (Brenda Edgerton Conley, Sharon J. Confessore) reports a study that describes the change and learning process as it relates to professional practice among a group of 24 school principals and identifies patterns of change and learning. "A Methodology for Narrative Inquiry: Examining the Role of Narrative in Framing for Action" (Nancy Lloyd Pfahl) presents a conceptual framework for interpreting the methodology and an innovative research model. The papers contain reference sections. (YLB)

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Symposium 17

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Leadership Development as Transformative Pedagogy

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The pace of change in society and its institutions is contributing to an increasing sense of uncertainty, ambiguity within organizations. In this context, leaders increasingly struggle, as change forces them to continuously choose between detachment and meaninglessness or "deep change." Choosing the former represents a slow death of the self and possible organizational disintegration. To address the demands of this highly tumultuous context, leadership development needs to be grounded in the notion of deep change in one's self, as well as in the organization. Relatively few studies, however, have focused on the pedagogical environments which seek to foster the "inner work" or transformative learning implied in this form of change. In this qualitative study, we examine the nature of such instructional environments, focusing specifically on the dynamic interplay among the teachers' beliefs, the learners' experiences, the content, and the instructional methods. The findings suggest five themes which characterize the instructional environments studied, in which participants construct, through myths, rituals, imagination, and creativity, a "metatext" which mediates the inner work of leadership development.

Keywords: Leadership Development, Transformative Learning, Instructional Environments

Fueled largely by rapid advances in technology, organizational leaders are confronted with escalating rates of change. While the most obvious of these changes is the decay of instrumental knowledge, advances are also bringing about dramatic change in personal, social, and cultural dimensions of organizational life. They are effecting how individuals understand their lives in and out of the workplace, how they define their place within the organization and within society, and how they relate to one another as people and as co-workers. These changes are sending shock waves through our culture, disrupting and calling into question long-held values and core beliefs, and luring us into roles of the powerless victim or passive observer (Quinn, 1996). To allow ourselves to be drawn into these roles, however, contributes to an increasing sense of meaninglessness and suggests a slow death of the self, manifest in feelings among professionals and organizational leaders of being disillusioned, overwhelmed, tired, worn down, or "burned out." This problem, however, extends beyond the inability or unwillingness of individual leaders to cope with this level of change. As Quinn (1996) points out, this notion of slow death of the self eventually results in a gradual disintegration of the organization.

The rapid pace of technological, social, and cultural change is bringing a bout a need for "deep change" at both the individual and organizational level. This notion of deep change implies a different way of thinking about leadership development, one that stresses inner work (Palmer, 1998) transformative learning (Cranton, 1996) and deep personal change (Quinn, 1996). In contrast with more traditional forms of incremental change, deep change "requires new ways of thinking and behaving. It is major in scope, discontinuous with the past and generally irreversible... Making a deep change involves... walking naked into the land of uncertainty" (Quinn, 1996, p. 3). It challenges our very sense of self-identity as organizational leaders. To engage in deep change is to enter, at a personal level, a transformative journey of profound dimensions – a dark night of the soul (Moore, 1992). Recent efforts to develop and improve leadership preparation programs represent attempts to address this context of change. Yet, these efforts seem to fall short of what is being demanded in this climate of change. For example, a number of graduate programs in educational leadership (McCarthy et. al., 1988; Murphy 1990; Tompkins 1996), as well as MBA programs (Boyatzes et. al., 1996; Porter & McKibbins, 1988) have been criticized for their ineffectiveness in developing human potential.

To prepare leaders able to engage and embrace deep change, leadership development programs need to be fundamentally grounded in the notions of inner work and transformative learning. Yet, we know relatively little about such instructional contexts or how they might be designed. The purpose of this study was to explore pedagogical practices that seek to foster transformative learning within a leadership development program. Specifically, we focused on the instructional environment and the dynamic interplay among the various elements of the instructional process, including the instructors beliefs, the methods of instruction, the content or subject matter being taught, and the learners' perceptions of their experiences.

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Conceptual Framework

Transformative learning represents a fascinating and challenging framework for understanding how professionals learn to become leaders. Theorists have pointed out the transformative potential inherent in contexts of professional development (Cranton, 1996) and, in particular, the study of leadership development. Quinn (1996) suggests that, when dealing with organizational problems, we sometimes need to alter our assumptions, rules, or paradigms and develop new theories about our surrounding environments and ourselves. To develop oneself as an effective organizational leader, Quinn argues, is to develop a new self. Quinn's notion of deep change parallels Mezirow's (1991) concept of transformative learning, which he defines as "the process of learning through critical self-reflection, which results in the reformulation of a meaning perspective to allow a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative understanding of one's experience." Stimulated by Mezirow's (1978) provocative study of women's re-entry into community colleges, this focus on transformative learning and the need for "inner work" is reflected in other forms of professional development and continuing education as well (Cranton, 1996; Dilworth & Willis, 1999; Palmer, 1998). Integral to transformative learning is integration of the learning task with learners' biographies and experiences. Such integration provides opportunities to reconstruct meanings associated with these experiences and the contexts in which they took place. According to transformation theory scholars, this process may lead to fundamental changes in one's sense of self (Dirkx, 1998) or in broader social structures in which one's life is embedded (Cunningham, 1998).

Much of the research and theory, however, has focused on the nature of experiences and cognitive structures associated with the meaning-making processes characteristic of transformative learning (Cranton, 1994; Mezirow, 1991). For the most part, these studies have paid relatively little attention to the specific contribution that content or subject matter and the instructional methods make to the transformative learning process (Taylor, 1997). This lack of attention to content in transformative learning is curious, given its almost universal presence in educational and training programs. It is our belief that content is not merely incidental in transformative learning but can actually mediate the process of inner work, transformative learning, and deep change. In leadership development programs, this content often reflects an emphasis on concepts of leadership. Connecting these concepts with learners' lives through experience-based learning strategies can help create learning environments that contribute to meaning-making and transformation (Dirkx, 1998). Palmer (1998) argues, "[W]hat we teach will never take unless it connects with the inward, living core of our students' lives" (p. 31). The idea of transformative learning as inner work is not merely a narcissistic, me-oriented perspective. It recognizes that "the work of the world" can only be accomplished through a deep sense of personal identity and integrity. Palmer (1998) refers to this process as doing the outer work through an inner journey. O'Reilley (1998) speaks of a pedagogy that allows the spirit to come home, "to Self, to community, and the revelations of reality" (p. 3). We can only be open to the needs of the world if we are open to a deeper awareness and understanding of our selves.

To better understand how we might design and implement such environments, however, requires us to attend to critical elements of the pedagogical context (Pratt, 1997). It is this problem that shaped the focus of our study. Our focus was on developing a better understanding of pedagogy as transformative. We were interested in the dynamic interplay among instructor's beliefs, the teaching methods used, the content, the learners' perceptions of their experiences, and how these features contributed to an instructional environment characterized by a potential for inner work and transformative learning. We sought to understand the beliefs, assumptions, and values which guided the instructors' practice, and how they viewed their pedagogy as transformative. We were also interested in understanding how the text or subject matter connects in a deep way with learners' lives and how the methods employed facilitated this process.

Research Design

The context for this study was a professional development experience for individuals pursuing graduate study in educational leadership. Both instructors included in this study espoused ideals consistent with the aim of fostering transformative learning. The study utilized an interpretive approach aiming to understand actions and meanings in particular contexts (Muncey & McQuillan 1996). Our approach to this study was open-ended, allowing themes and emphases to emerge from the observations and the data, rather than specifying from the start particular relationships or expected outcomes. We began this investigation with an interest in students making sense of instructional content but, beyond that, we were not sure where our investigation would lead. An ethnographic approach was selected as the most appropriate research methodology because our focus was on the social and cultural context of instruction within a particular setting, the various ways in which meaning came to be construed, and how these meanings

shaped and influenced the participants behaviors in this context. As Muncey and McQuillan (1996) suggest, our methods were not "just relying on interviews, but drawing on observational data and cultural artifacts" (p.297). Our time commitment to this context was consistent with similar ethnographic investigations of educational contexts. One of the authors immersed herself in the context, enrolling in the classes and taking field notes related to instruction on a continuous basis. This participatory approach provides the advantage of the insider's perspective on the continuity of classroom events across time. While questions of bias can be raised, we believe multiple sources of evidence address these concerns.

The setting consisted of the classroom instruction of two teachers of a graduate program in educational leadership at a large midwestern university. One of the instructors[1] is a white, middle-aged man while the other is a woman of color, also of middle-age but several years younger than her male counterpart. Both are well established in their academic careers and are well respected in their respective areas of study. Both instructors are well-known by students and colleagues as utilizing deeply engaging pedagogical practices. They described their own practices as aiming toward transformative learning. The masters level courses selected for inclusion in this study were: Organizational Theory, Leadership and Organizational Development, and Schools, Families & Communities. These courses represent a critical aspect of the leadership development program in this institution and they are exemplars of how these two professors model the patterns of transformative pedagogy in their instructional approach when teaching leadership.

Data collection occurred over nine months and included participant observation while attending all the class sessions and document analysis (syllabi, tentative agenda sheets, handout materials, students written works). In-depth interviews, lasting approximately 90 minutes, were conducted with each professor and a selection of students who were engaged in the same experience at the time. The course materials and instructional approaches were the same for all students. We used a convenience sampling of students, based on their availability at the time of interviewing. Both professors and students were interviewed after completion of the courses. All data were subjected to ethnographic analysis, examining and comparing the data embedded in the interview transcripts, documents, and observation notes in a way which allowed us to identify themes characterizing the instructional approach used by the professors. These themes, in turn, helped describe the observed instructional environment and allowed us to make some conclusions regarding its implications for professional leadership development.

Findings

Our findings are represented in five key themes which characterize these instructional settings. We will identify and briefly define these five themes. Then, through discussion of particular case vignettes, we will further illustrate their overall nature and how they contributed to the transformative pedagogy practiced by these two instructors. While we present and briefly discuss these themes separately, it is important to realize that, in reality, they are all intertwined within the complex and dynamic environment of these instructional settings.

The five themes that emerged during the analysis of data and which described key features of the instructional environments were: (a) leadership viewed as a field of inquiry, (b) opportunity for students to explore new roles, (c) presence and processing of social conflict, (d) opportunity for action and reflection on that action, and (e) the creation of myths and rituals within the learning setting. The instructors use their curriculum in a way that conveys a sense of leadership as a field of inquiry. In studying leadership, learners name and explore complex relations within their real jobs and as those relate to themselves. For example, in the class on organizational theory, leadership concepts helped learners unpack the structural, symbolic, and political frames of organizations. The instructors use these concepts as a framework to consider issues around leadership. The concepts are introduced by means of propositions structured in the form of experiential exercises, selected and ordered by the instructors so that learners' experiences in class were associated with certain concepts of leadership. Research and theory is used as a lens through which to understand and makes sense of these experiences.

The instructional context also provided participants with opportunities to experience situations in new ways. Through a variety of instructional strategies, the students encountered and lived through new roles, which often differed and contrasted with those in which they lived in their daily lives. Students' beliefs about self and their understanding of educational leadership were challenged by means of those experiences, which involved the probing of new roles. The learning environment we studied was also characterized by the surfacing and processing of conflict within the group and among its members. The instructors believe that, in a transformative environment, the

[1] Although our oral agreement with the professors did not include a pledge of confidentiality or anonymity, we are using pseudonyms as the professors' names. We are also using direct quotes from the interviews.

experiencing and processing of social conflict by the students is critical to the whole learning experience. Their approaches stressed the need for students to experience novelty, ambiguity, and anxiety under unpredictable circumstances. The various ways in which instructional strategies were selected and used reflected this overall commitment to the value and significance of conflict in the development of leadership skills.

Engaging learners in action and reflection on that action was also a critical dimension of these instructional environments. As one instructor put it, "Educational leadership is about action." If educational leadership is about doing, than it has to have a pedagogy that allows learners the opportunity "to do and reflect on their actions; in all instances, the real material of the class is as much the experience of the students as it is what their reading is." Participants were consistently involved in experiential activities, which authentically engaged them in real and concrete organizational and leadership issues. A significant dimension of their learning experiences involved reflection on and processing of the actions in which they were engaged. Finally, pedagogical practices in these contexts involved the creation of rituals and myths within the formal learning setting. Active forms of imagination, such as myth, symbol and drama, were used to surface, name, and interpret meanings associated with the learners' own work experiences, the new roles they were experiencing in this setting, and the conflicts that ensued around these active and reflective forms of learning in which they were engaged.

In the following two cases, one from each instructor's practice, we will illustrate more fully each of these themes and how they are actually interwoven within this instructional context. In this first selection, these five features of the instructional environment reflect Malcom's commitment to the use of image and symbol as a way of making sense of our experiences of leadership and what we are learning through its formal study.

Case 1: Drama and Symbol of "Organizational Stories"

When introducing the students to different frames of organizations in the course on organizational theory, Dr. Malcom used an approach which is described in the literature as "organizational stories" (Ochs, Smith, & Taylor, 1990). She would not view them as monologues or cultural artifacts but would focus instead on *how* they are told and on the meanings, identities, and ideologies that emerge in the process of telling them. The stories can be told both verbally and non-verbally, so that myths and rituals can be created within the space and time of a session. An example of using the creation of myths and rituals is "A Close Examination of Culture" session. The idea here was to introduce the content - the concept of the cultural frame of organizations - in ways that make immediate and fundamental sense to the students. Malcolm introduced the word *Ecotonos* as an analogy for the multicultural nature of a society, an environment formed by overlapping, adjoining communities. This session was a drama played by different groups of students, spatially arranged in circles. Each group had to think about and represent attitudes, beliefs, time orientation, and kinesthetic space that were characteristic of exotic communities they were representatives of: *Anthiens, Delphinians, Aquilians* . While the first represented the nurturing, peacemaking attitudes, the Delphinians resembled a modern American culture which is more individualistic. The last group lived "by examples of our Father" and related to the family ties.

Within their assigned "culture," the participants had to understand the language of artifacts (daily agendas, rituals, tasks), language of time (the one lived referring to the values of the past while the others might have been oriented into the future), and language of space (physical kinesthetic relationships). Representation of this sort, it was thought, aims to push the students to understand organizational culture beneath all the structures of the cultural environment and to present their understanding as a *metaphor* to the rest of the class in a creative way. By drawing on *the image*, which symbolized the culture, the students were to *apply* their metaphor to a concrete task that the professor passed around. The task was given in a form of a case study and was entitled The *New Plant Site.* The different "cultural communities" were to determine the best site for the new plant. Time was of the essence in the student decisions. Space was another critical dimension in relationships between the students. There was a certain spatial language within each of the cultures - gestures, distance between the speakers, etc. So part of the story here was exploring how things work in different cultural contexts, and one reason for that, presumably, was to get some perspective on how "to assess the cultural/symbolic tenor of the organizations where students work" (excerpt from the course syllabus).

By means of such a game-session, Malcolm was modeling the analysis of the organizational cultural language for the students to understand: What is going on within the "cultural community"? In the assignment sheet, she described the purpose for such a class: "This is a purposeful activity that asks you to employ the chapters of Bolman & Deal, and Morgan to articulate: What we do, How we talk (utilizing specialized language), Reveal the tangible objects, Examine the use of space and time, and Assess the levels and kinds of participation with attention to diversity and forms of leadership." This excerpt shows how the subject matter or the formal text of the theoretical

course--the concept of the cultural frame of organizations as interpreted in books by Bolman & Deal and Morgan--are explored by means of applying the concepts of leadership to the student experiences as a framework for analysis. This framework has its spatial, temporal, and material dimensions, which manifest through social interactions among the students and are amplified at the interface of the individual and the social meaning making processes.

On the one hand, while moving back and forth between individual perceptions of the culture being represented and the contradictions of instructions given in the assignment cards to different groups, developing a group metaphor and confronting the opposite beliefs from "other cultures", the students developed novel meanings of *selves*. Excerpts from the student interviews reflect this finding: " [The activity] was good for me because I learned about the lack of my knowledge about myself."; "When you are going to interact with somebody, you can't put your own perceptions on that person. I felt that's what the professor was trying to get us to click on. I think a lot of that is coming from my own being a Native American, from my native environment. It's crucial to that learning... I use a lot that we did in class in my work with [residence assistants] where we have to communicate, to interact, and to listen to everybody."

On the other hand, by virtue of creation of "the space of shared boundary" (Briskin 1996), while exploring the organizational culture, the students were also developing novel meanings *between* them. In Eisenberg's (1990, 142) terms, they were not only focusing on any one individual's "compliance-gaining strategies", but rather were investigating the emerging pattern of group behavior and its influence on decision making process. All players of this drama were exposed, in a metaphorical way, to a controversial situation (e.g., a school board meeting), thus illuminating the complex issues of what it takes for teachers to take leadership to do the best for kids. This would be an example for a dilemma which may be faced by the students in their real work organizations and which is modeled by the professor in class by means of an experiential activity that involves much of the participants' imagination and metaphoric thinking.

This case selection represents, in a dynamic way, the five themes which characterized the instructional environments observed: inquiry into the phenomenon of leadership, opportunities for the experience of new roles, engaging and processing social conflict, and acting and reflecting on that action. Dominant throughout this instructional setting was the use of images to deepen understanding and meaning of these experiences (Dirkx 1998). The next case selection also demonstrates the presence of these five themes but how they are dynamically inter-related within the broader issue of naming and processing conflict. Johnston believes that this is achieved by creating instructional environments, which get learners out of their comfort zones.

Case 2: "Crossing Comfort Zones"

In his instructional approach, Dr. Johnston focuses on differences among people within organizations, and how they struggle with each other's attitudes when making decisions. He is convinced that social and personal conflict promote change in the structures of society, in organizations, and in the individual's psyche. According to Johnston, the responsibility of leadership is not to suppress conflict but to surface it, deal with it, manage it, make it productive. Within his course, an arena for experiencing ambiguity and surfacing conflict was the Bone Game, adapted by Johnston from the Indian folk tradition. The interviewed students mentioned this game as one of the strongest experiences of the course. Many limitations of the game rules (e.g., separate location of the groups; communication between the groups only through a representative; one person talking at a time) engaged learners in a series of conflicts. These conflicts revolved around communication, finding ways for collaborative decision making, and dealing with their own individual assumptions that had been roughly tested. As the interviewees recalled, some students look exasperated and some felt pushed by the rules to feel guilty for "every injustice on the earth."

The idea here involved the learner choosing these feelings and consciously, taking the focus off him or herself and how he or she feels in class, and placing the focus on the feelings of those group members who were trying to share their experiences with the learner. In other words, learners were being asked to concentrate more on identifying with the worlds of others. As one learner described his impression of the experience, "It was a very powerful experience. We were forced really to work together, and there was no way to go around it, no way to hide from that... It was long, it was tedious, I was really embarrassed some times." These observations reflect those of Scott (1991), where people "entered into the action-reaction-reflection process; they became aware of the distortion of their assumptions through the action of those assumptions and reflection through critique." The whole class was so engaged in surfacing these sociolinguistic meaning perspectives that they forgo their break. At the same time there was a lot of anxiety present in the instructional setting. "Still", the same student suggests, "I really wanted to get this experience what this was supposed to be. I was getting [at times] into frustration and, sometimes, anger...

But I felt pride of accomplishment. My anger and my frustration were worthwhile." In this situation, students were frustrated with the way messages were sent and received, and the meanings that were spoken out in different languages by learners who had different intentions, feelings and desires. These processes seem critical to a deeper understanding of transformative pedagogy.

In a different way, this case selection also reflects the dynamic interplay of the five themes discussed earlier. Both Malcom and Johnston structure the study of leadership as a form of active inquiry into one's experiences, both in the classroom and in one's own practices. They both also rely on the creation and experience of new situations and roles as a means of mediating that form of inquiry. In this case, however, Johnston uses differences among participants to surface, name, and process conflicts that are clearly evident within the learning experience. The processes used to act on and reflect among these conflicts is an attempt to mirror how one might understand and approach differences and conflict within organizations. While Malcom stressed the use of imagination and creatively construing meaning from learning experiences, Johnston emphasizes a more reflective approach. Yet, his use of indigenous practices also reveals his commitment to myths and rituals as a means of structuring and shaping the meaning of the students' experiences.

Discussion

Beyond the dynamic interplay of the five themes discussed and illustrated in the previous section, the analysis of the instructional setting investigated in this study suggests some key dimensions of a transformative pedagogy. As it is illustrated in the practices of these two instructors, transformative pedagogy involves the construction by the group of learners of a metatext. It is this metatext, rather than the formal text, which serves to mediate the transformative experiences within the setting. In engaging in an active, reflective, and imaginative inquiry of leadership, participants construct a text which itself becomes the focus of study. This metatext, resulting from or arising out of these activities, represents the common or shared meanings that the group-as-a-whole has constructed and provides further focus for both individual and collective inquiry into the meaning of the experiences being derived.

It seems clear that this metatext results from imaginative and creative engagement with both the formal text and with each other's lived experiences. Participants – teachers and learners alike – have to have some way of making sense of the material that is put forth within these contexts, some means of integrating it within their own frames of reference (Mezirow, 1991). The use of stories, myths, and rituals provides the basis for participants to engage this "content" on their own terms, yet within a "vocabulary" that is common to the group. Finally, the metatext and its imaginative construction provide the means for engaging in the difficult but necessary inner work involved in deep change (Quinn, 1996).

We can think of the content that is negotiated in the group and the meaning which is to be constructed by the students as representing what Palmer (1998) refers to as "outer work." But to confront the process of deep change, the teachers need to engage participants in a process of negotiation of this text in ways that would be most authentic to their "inner journey". This "inner journey" implies one's questioning of the current assumptions and beliefs. It resides in one's own real life contexts, and has a potential to foster significant change in ways in which one thinks and acts. Strategies to embark on such a journey can be found in the pedagogy of drama as well as in the ancient ways of performance embedded in different cultures throughout the world. This aspect was evident in the Bone Game where participants exercised new roles, often in situations of discomfort and anxiety, even conflict. The situations of social conflicts, simulated by the instructors in a certain sequence and organized around certain issues of educational leadership, fostered the students' inquiry into the self and, by virtue of this, a more intensive inquiry into the issues and controversies of leadership.

This notion of a metatext, constructed through imaginative and creative engagement with the text and each other, and mediating inner work and deep change, addresses one of the most challenging aspects of leadership in this era of rapid and pervasive change. It helps us understand how, in leadership, constructive action can occur under conditions of limited shared understandings. We have seen that such conditions are increasingly the hallmark of this era of change. Yet, the processes described here provide us with a sense of how participants may derive satisfaction and meaning, even in situations where experience does not follow the norms of communicative clarity and openness and may involve only minimally disclosive exchanges. The metatext, a product of the work of the group-as-a-whole, represents something powerful enough to allow group members to derive meaning and satisfaction from acting together. The transformative pedagogy described here to foster leadership development relied not on a strong degree of certainty, instrumental learning, and technical-rational problem solving, but rather coordinated action and the balancing of autonomy and interdependence in organizing action. Eisenberg (1990) refers to such processes as *jamming*, analogous to improvisational, coordinated actions in music and sports.

Thus, what participants are learning through this form of transformative pedagogy is that leadership involves a high degree of improvisation. It is through this act of jamming or improvising that the real work of leadership is carried out, in a way similar to how the groups observed here constructed a metatext. Like jamming, one cannot predict ahead of time what the outcome of the activity will be but, if participants enter into the process in a spirit of reflective inquiry, are open to novel experiences, and authentically and imaginatively engage the task and each other, music will result. The difficult part is that educators may not feel prepared to deal with what might be uncovered in the process of individual and collective critical reflection on psychic assumptions.

Implications for Leadership Development and the Practice of HRD

Leadership development as transformative pedagogy implies a shift in instructional emphasis from structure to process. This shift also involves a move from enforcing the learners' competence to engaging them in actions or improvised performances that would allow them to develop familiarity with the dialectics of the ongoing processes of interpersonal and within-group relationships in all kinds of communities of practice. A series of performances can become a series of mediations into the learners' study of self. These performances can help learners gain insights into difficult personal and organizational issues (the formal text) confronting leaders today (Quinn, 1996). In this view, creating learning environments assumes a change in the perspective of the training environment, from static structures to "sociosymbolic fields" (Turner, 1986, p. 21). That is, pedagogical contexts are seen as more than locations for instrumental learning and technical-rational problem solving. Rather, they represent specific contexts in which and through which participants are able to construct or reconstruct individual and collective meaning, through the presence of symbols and images which constitute this location of learning. Formal text, like the issues and controversies of educational leadership, can be introduced and negotiated through symbolic action, the genre of which would be shaped by both instructor's beliefs about the text and learners' conscious reflecting on cultural representations in which those issues and controversies of professional leadership are embedded. The symbolic messages and signals, which learners exchange inside the frame of the selected activities, designed by the teachers and improvised by the students, rely on the students' real life contexts. They serve to build a projective system, a shared meaning perspective--*a metatext.* In turn, this metatext functions as a pedagogic tool, providing data for further student reflection on and analysis of self.

It is still often the case in the field of HRD that focusing too much on bottom line results ignores the feelings and exploration of self. As Swanson and Arnold put it (1996), "a line is sometimes drawn between those who view HRD as tied to business goals and focused on the bottom line and those who would like to take a more humanistic stance"(p. 17). In this study, we described an instructional approach to leadership development that has the potential to bridge this gap. It invites participants to embark on leadership development as doing the outer work through inner work, relies on their imagination and creativity, and provides opportunity to experience the power of symbol and ritual embedded in the collective reflecting on the instructional content. This work represents an exploratory venture into the possibilities of transformative pedagogy for leadership development. We are only on the cusp of a fundamentally different way of understanding learning for organizational leadership.

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The Added Dimension: Using the Learning and Change Model as a Means for Understanding Professionals' Performance

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This study describes the change and learning process as it relates to professional practice among a selected group of 24 school principals. It identifies patterns of change and learning. The study uses a qualitative approach similar to the study of change and learning among physicians conducted by Fox, Mazmanian, and Putnam (1989). The study presented an additional factor to the investigation of professionals' learning by attempting to discern the differences in learning of designated "successful" and "unsuccessful" professionals.

Keywords: Learning, Performance, Professional Development

Improving professional practice is a major concern of all professional groups, and providing effective mechanisms for this improvement is a critical task of HRD practitioners. Improving practice is linked to educational activities and learning events. Thus, for the most professionalized occupations, such as law and medicine, as well as the quasi-professional occupations, such as education and management, it is expected that all individuals will continue to learn, and that this learning will accrue to better professional practice (Cervero, 1990; Houle, 1980; Nowlen, 1988).

Fox, Mazmanian, and Putnam (1989), in an investigation of physicians, theorized that professionals continue to learn because of changes in their lives and their practices. They proposed a theory of change and learning and an accompany model for this process that can best be described in the following statements. The model assumes that professionals have the capacity to develop a plan for learning and to develop capabilities to make needed changes in practice.

1. The change process begins with an intrinsic or extrinsic force.
2. After the professional accepts that the force for change is important, a mental image of what kind of change is necessary develops.
3. With this change in mind, the individual judges the extent to which he or she is able to make the change, whether or not the present level of knowledge and skill is adequate compared to the level of knowledge and skill needed to make the change.
4. If he or she believes his or her capabilities are sufficient, the change is made. If not, a plan for learning to develop capabilities to make the change is pursued.

They studied what, how, and why physicians change in their personal and professional lives and the role of learning in the change process. Their findings essentially reversed the usual model of training, where the learning intervention is presented, and the change in practice occurs as a result of the intervention. By focusing on the changes that occurred in the physicians' lives, they determined that the size or impact of the change (accommodation, incremental or structural)and the force (personal, professional, social) that caused the change, influenced the amount of learning that would occur. A host of similar studies, each focusing on a different professional or quasi-professional group (Confessore and Smith, 1997; Fox and Harvey, 1994; Katzman, 1996; Price, Knowles and Confessore, 1993) substantiated these findings. However, there were some unique characteristics by profession. Price (1997), for example, in his study of architects found that while the patterns of change and learning are similar to those of Fox, et al., experience and the culture of the professional also frames the changes that professionals initiate, and as a consequence, the learning that will occur.

Improving practice is a key purpose of continuing education, both formal and informal. These studies provide much rich information describing how professionals learn, and gives us some insight into the triggering events that cause learning to occur. What they fail to do is directly describe or help us understand how professionals' learning experiences can be linked to their performance as professionals. This is the central problem

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addressed by this study: Whether Fox et al.'s theory of change and learning can be used to identify distinctive learning among professionals categorized as being in "successful" or "unsuccessful".

This categorization of "successful" and "unsuccessful" acknowledges that school performance is determined by more variables than just the performance of the principal; however, substantial research evidence demonstrates that the principal is key to the success of planned change, school improvement, and effective schools (Murphy and Beck, 1993; Fullan, 1991). Principals are expected to transform schools into collegial environments where effective teaching and learning take place. In this environment, an individual principal's performance evaluation is inextricably tied to school performance. In this district, for example, principals' who's schools failed to meet standards set by the state after three years were dismissed from their positions.

Methodology

The research was designed to answer three primary questions: (1) How do principals, as professionals, learn and change; (2) How do successful and unsuccessful principals describe the change and learning process; and (3) Is it possible to discern differences between the two categorizations of principals?

Setting and Selection Criteria

The study took place in a large urban school district in the Middle-Atlantic region of the United States. The district has 122 elementary schools and 60 secondary schools. The sample was drawn from the 122 principals assigned to elementary schools. School principals were selected as the population for this study for a number of reasons. Principals, as school administrators, are expected to transform schools into collegial environments where effective teaching takes place. Fullan (1993) declared that managing school change and improvement is one of the most complex tasks of school leadership. As school reform efforts around the country continue to raise expectations for principals' performance, the demands and expectations for principals as individuals increase. While the public school system is a very unique context, the roles, duties, and expectations for its leaders are very similar to corporate organizations. The principalship is seen as a quasi-professional occupation, placing it at the lower end of the professionalization continuum, as described by Cervero (1988). The site was selected because the district had been selected to participate in a state-mandated school performance program, which utilized a comprehensive and complex process for assigning performance ratings for each school. This provided a consistent means for determining "successful" and "unsuccessful" categories. To determine these categories, the State Board devised school rating list was obtained. The list was then divided into quartiles, with the 1st quartile being designated as successful and the 4th as unsuccessful. Only those principals who had served in a school for three years or more were included in the sample, insuring that no principal was assigned to a school after the state index categorization had been established. Fifty-three of the district's 182 principals met the above criteria, with 26 falling in either the 1st or 4th quartile.

Data Collection

Interviews were conducted with 24 of the 26 participants. The interview protocol devised by Fox et al. was used for these interviews, with minor changes made to the language to reflect the professional circumstances of the principals. The Fox protocol includes 26 structured and semi-structured interview questions, and a prompt sheet. The prompt sheet provides examples of potential areas of change, and was developed by Fox et al. (1989) to provide some probing questions to help respondents remember the changes that had occurred in their lives or in their professional activities. In addition, demographic data was also gathered, including gender, age, and length of service with the district. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Interviews lasted approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours.

Findings

Principals' change and learning

Principals reported all three types of changes: accommodations, incremental, and structural. Accommodations are small, simple acts of adjustment in practice, where very little learning occurs. The principals

reported the fewest number of changes in this category. Examples of this type of change include checking the fax machine more often to respond to the central office more immediately than before, or learning how to complete new reports. Incremental changes, requiring adapt ing to more complex situations or new information, accounted for the most changes with these principals and included examples such as sharpening mentoring skills to improve quality of work with new teachers and developing strategies to decrease the number of hours spent working on school assignments at home. Finally, the principals also reported structural changes, or very large, complex changes. These changes often involved major life events and led to the most in-depth learning experiences. Examples of these types of change include the decision to retire or to implement a complex professional development system for the faculty of the school.

The data were also analyzed in terms of the forces for change that the principals reported. Personal-professional forces most often precipitated the accommodations. These are situations where the impetus for change was largely for personal reasons, but was also related to the principals' work. For example, a principal reported the need to be better organized in her personal life in order to be able to respond to the many inquiries and requests for information that she confronts daily. Incremental changes were most often associated with professional forces for change; situations where the principal made a decision to change practice in order to improve professional practice. An example of this type of force and the resulting practice change occurred when a principal stated, "I have participated in activities designed to sharpened my mentoring skills to improve the quality of my work with new teachers." Finally, structural changes were most often associated with personal forces, such as when a principal described fundamentally altering the way that she did her job to incorporate new ways of thinking that she learned in formal courses.

When analyzing the types of activities the principals reported and the considerations they made when determining the learning activities they would choose, four factors emerged: (1) the principals' perception of the complexity of their professional environments, (2) the structure of the school system, (3) how much time they felt they had to learn, and (4) the principal's own assessment of current knowledge level and learning needs. The principals reported being very limited in the amount of control they believe they have over their own essential practice decisions. One can speculate that this lack of professional control may be a strong influencing factor in their self-perceived capacity to engage in their own learning.

When talking about the changes that they undertook, the principals did not report having a clear image of the desired change. Principals described their work environments as ones where they had limited control over their work tasks and even less ability to determine the priorities for their schools. Thus, their descriptions of change and learning were very reactive— there was limited planned response to the changes, and apparently no opportunities to consider their own learning "gaps."

Differences between successful and unsuccessful principals

In analyzing the data by category of principal, no differences were found when a simple count of the numbers or types of changes was made. Similarly, in analyzing the transcripts, there did not appear to be any substantive differences between the groups when they described forces of change that precipitated the learning. It was possible, however, to discern differences in (1) the amount of learning the principals reported as a result of the change; (2) the way that successful and unsuccessful principals described how they organized and planned their learning activities and (3) the way they attributed the need for the incremental type changes.

Unsuccessful principals reported making changes without any learning occurring while the successful principals reported that they learned from the changes. They also reported a greater use of deliberative learning methods, defined here as those that emphasize thought over action, to make changes regardless of the type of change that occurred.

In describing their incremental changes, successful principals talked more frequently about making these changes for internally driven reasons, such as the desire to be more efficient, while unsuccessful principals, in describing their incremental changes, attributed them more to the effects of the external forces inherent in the job, such as being "forced" to introduce new faculty development programs.

Although none of the principals appeared to be especially proactive in their pursuit of their learning opportunities within the context of specific practice situations, the successful principals more often reported seeking out opportunities for generic learning, meaning that they engaged in activities such as taking courses at the local colleges, or enrolling in doctoral studies so that they could improve their practice and become more effective principals.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to determine if it was possible to discern differences between the change and learning behaviors of quasi-professionals who had been categorized as successful or unsuccessful. The Fox et al. (1989) theory of change and learning did prove to be an effective means to distinguish the motivations and type of learning activities of successful and unsuccessful professionals, the model did not adequately account for situations where professionals believe they have limited control over the conditions of their work, where they lack respect from their constituents, and where the time of professional training is short and the knowledge base is neither complex nor specialized.

The patterns of change and learning the principals are similar to those discovered in the study of physicians; however, important differences were found. Most notable was the lack of new learning associated with the changes made by the principals. This lack is attributed to the principals' perceptions of lack of control. Unlike physicians, the principals believe they have very little control over their work environments and conditions for delivery of services. In contrast, the physicians in the Fox et al. study were very autonomous in their practices. Although managed care is changing this sense of autonomy, physicians' work is still focused on meeting the needs of individual clients while principals are generally responsible for multiple constituencies many of whom are outside of their immediate control.

Similar findings were also obtained in related studies of architects, teachers, and real estate professionals. Their change and learning behaviors were consistent with the original physicians' study. However, as with the physicians, these professionals report a high degree of autonomy and personal control over their professional practice, and the issue of "reactive learning" does not seem to occur. Thus it appears that this belief of lack of professional control may be a strong influencing factor in the capacity of principals to effectively learn from the changes presented in their practices. Smith's (1997) study of change and learning of real estate agents is particularly instructive, because Smith used a population of individuals who can be categorized as less professionalized than principals. She found great similarities in the learning behaviors of these individuals and those in the most professionalized occupational groups. Again, these individuals had very great autonomy in the conditions of their professional practice— perhaps the most control of all of the professions who have been studied.

Another factor that may account for this difference is the lack of extended professional preparation, and general lack of respect of society for the principals. Smith (1997) found that the real estate agents were distinctive in that they sought opportunities to learn "how to be a real estate professional." She speculated that this need was driven by the fact that real estate professionals are poorly trained, and are not particularly respected by society. Principals are similar in both of these regards. The knowledge base needed to perform effectively as a principal is not sufficiently distinctive to be perceived by the public as complex and specialized. Because principals lack the extended training of traditional professionals, including "a set of values, preferences, and norms which they use to make sense of practice situations, formulate goals, and directions for action and to determine what constitutes acceptable professional conduct" (Schon, 1988, p. 33) they may feel more pressure to respond to all demands of the varied constituencies who believe they have a right to direct the activities of the principal. At the very least, they are poorly prepared to undertake the role of principal, particularly at a time when schools, and their personnel are under attack as failed organizations, subject to extensive pressures and demands of a society who spends large amounts of tax money to support them. Thus, this "reacting" behavior may be the only way that principals can even begin to meet these professional demands.

Intriguingly, the finding that the only real difference between the successful and unsuccessful principals was the greater amount of generic learning reported by the successful principals supports this assertion that perceived lack of control is a key issue for change and learning of the quasi-professional group. It was clear that the successful principals were aware that they had limited opportunities to control and influence their work environments. They believed that theoretical knowledge would help them to get the job better under control. Thus, these learning opportunities were a way to find some control, even help them become more pro-active in their practice.

Implications for HRD Practice

The circumstances of practice encountered by corporate managers are similar to those of school principals. Management can be categorized as a quasi-profession, whose members are faced with many demands and little control over their work situations. Similar to principals, managers lack a coherent knowledge base and generally are not highly respected by the larger society. The findings from this study provide an intriguing perspective to address the lack of learning by managers. These findings suggest that learning is inhibited by the speed of the changes and

the complexity of the environments. This is a particularly important, because the workplace of the new century is increasingly complex and the rate of acceleration of change is undeniable.

It appears that the Fox et al. framework for studying professionals'learning provides HRD professionals with a means to investigate the specific learning needs of their managers. The finding that successful quasi-professionals utilize generic learning activities to help achieve some sense of control and mastery over their professional practices provides one way to begin to develop learning programs for mangers. Once the HRD professional understands the forces for change and then learning, they will be able to devise mechanisms and strategies to help managers understand their learning needs.

Learning as a key to improving professional practice is a fundamental premise of HRD. By linking performance to the change and learning model, a critical dimension to understanding how to best help professionals is added, helping to improve the practice of professional managers.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study provides the most basic first steps to understanding differences among professionals' learning needs and proclivities. Further research is needed to expand this initial work. Specifically, we recommend:

1. That this study should be replicated with other quasi-professional groups. In addition, the designation of "successful" and "unsuccessful" professionals was done using a mechanical and somewhat artificial mechanism. A future study, using other assessment tools, would provide an alternative means to define effective practice.
2. While the change and learning model held in terms of forces for change and types of change, the idea of public perception of profession as an influencing learning factor is intriguing, but highly speculative. Other studies focusing in this area would provide important additional understanding of professional's learning.
3. Finally, better understanding of how to improve the practice of school principals is an important national priority. The Fox et al. model appears to have efficacy as a mechanism for understanding how school principals learn. More work needs to be done with larger and more diverse populations.

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A Methodology for Narrative Inquiry: Examining the Role of Narrative in Framing for Action

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Narrative inquiry is a research methodology that beckons a researcher as interpreter, artist, and composer (Price, 1999). This paper builds a case for using narrative inquiry to examine the role of narrative in framing for action in an organizational context. It presents (1) a conceptual framework for interpreting the methodology and (2) an innovative research model. The methodology has evolved narratively as the researcher has used it to examine the contribution of narrative processes to learning how to change. She expects to complete this doctoral study in the spring and encourages others to adapt its methodology in other organizational settings.

Keywords: Narrative Inquiry, Learning from Experience, Organizational Learning

We all know from daily living that sometimes we learn from our own experience and from the experience of others. In our professional practices we frequently recount what has happened, describe what we have been engaged in doing, and tell others what we hope to do and how we plan to do it. Very often, however, we find it challenging to explain how things actually happened, even when we have achieved desired results. Connecting past, present, and future events narratively is one way of making the meaning of what has happened more accessible. When we engage in this kind of dialogical exchange, sometimes we tell stories. Stories trigger new insight that differs from learning that emerges from analysis. These different thought processes that lead us to adopt beliefs fall into at least two categories, first differentiated by Bruner (1986) as analytical and narrative.

Analytical and narrative processes each assume an epistemology of the nature and grounds of knowledge. Analytical processes are linear patterns of thought that follow rules of logical argument. The purpose of argument is to convince us of truth. Using analytical processes helps us understand *what* is happening. One familiar pattern of analysis is to separate a subject of analysis into its logical components to gain better understanding of the whole. The notion of modern scientific progress has been built on such deductive processes.

Narrative processes, on the other hand, rely upon inductive reasoning that acknowledges and values contextual elements. Narrative thinking encompasses hermeneutic processes in which story emerges as a means for interpreting relationships and action. Integration is a dominant narrative pattern that we use to create and share informative narratives that interpret reality. The purpose of story, as differentiated from argument, is to convince us of lifelikeness or verisimilitude, rather than truth. In my research I have found that examining narrative processes contributes to understanding *how* things actually happen in an organizational setting.

My desire to research part of this complexity led me to design the proposed methodology. Because narrative processes frequently are more intuitive than intentional, most people use them with limited self-awareness. Narrative inquiry lends itself to studying such tacit knowledge (Polyani, 1966). The act of narration seems particularly relevant to study personal practice knowledge of educators, since that knowledge often remains unarticulated (Schon, 1987). We educators frequently "know more than we can tell" (Polyani, 1966, 6). This kind of knowing includes both theoretical and practical knowledge, both the *what* and the *how* of our practice. In this case nine participants, members of an established leadership team and learning group, engage in activities that respond to the question, "How can higher education learn how to change?" (Eckel, Hill, and Green, 1998).

The research literature, however, includes fewer systematic models than I had expected (Josselson and Lieblich, 1999) for studying tacit knowledge, particularly given the pervasiveness of story (product) and narrative (process) in organizational contexts (Boje, 1994; Czarniawska, 1997). This gap in the literature led me to develop a conceptual framework to lend credence to the proposed research model. It combines both analytical and narrative thinking, supports a constructivist interpretation of experience, and leads to findings presented as story. The methodology has enabled me and my co-researchers, the participants, to understand more clearly how narrative processes have contributed to their learning how to frame for action. Just as importantly, it has

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contributed to reducing the volume of collected data. The latter contribution is significant, for it is the task of a writer of qualitative research "not to gather as much data as possible but rather to get rid of as much as possible, to winnow the irrelevant from the essence" (Wolcott in Price, 1999, 17).

This paper (1) interprets the conceptual framework from which my approach to narrative inquiry derives; (2) poses the research question addressed by the paper; (3) describes the research model and its narrative evolution; (4) presents results and findings related to using the methodology; (5) draws conclusions and recommendations for further application of the methodology, and (6) acknowledges potential contributions to HRD.

Conceptual Framework

In preparation to conduct this narrative inquiry, I first reexamined the tenets of modernity and post-modernity and their implications related to learning from experience. Postmodernity is "culture that is self-consciously and sympathetically informed by an understanding of (1) the interpretative nature of human perception; (2) the indeterminate, contextualized, and fragmented nature of knowing and being; and (3) the dedifferentiated and generalized nature of contemporary communication" (Bagnall, 1999, 5). Postmodern theory provides a particular lens for viewing the learning of individuals, groups, and organizations. It underpins my interpretation of the story of how we construct meaning in a postmodern world, how we value our experience and the experience of others, how we use language to interpret experience and to construct meaning, and how the nature of research has changed. I decided to tell you about this four-part conceptual framework before presenting my research design because my interpretation of these issues explains the research design.

How We Construct Meaning in a Postmodern World

Knowing and learning are two means available to us to construct meaning in a postmodern world. If belief and knowledge are provisional and partial at any time, and if they are determined interpretatively by a learner, then the value of trying to answer a fundamental question becomes apparent. How can researchers as learners approach knowing and learning so as to empower themselves to develop a capacity to learn in more meaningful ways? Because "it is difficult to have faith in the traditional stories" (Czikszentmihalyi, 1993, xv), a researcher must believe that identifiable processes for making meaning do exist, and must also develop and trust a personal capacity to learn how to change.

Making these two foundational assumptions motivated me to develop a narrative methodology that contributes to understanding how to construct meaning from fragments of personal experience and from the experience of others. If you and I, for example, were to experience the same event, and we both were motivated to act on the basis of our shared experience, each of us would construct coexistent, but different, meanings of our experience, each informed by the singularity and similarity of the other. Our interpretations would reflect different past experience, different frames of perception, and different ways of interpreting our shared experience. Furthermore, each of us probably would choose to act differently in one way or another on the basis of that experience. Each interpretation would be true within the inter-subjective, linguistically mediated frameworks of our beliefs (Bagnall, 1999).

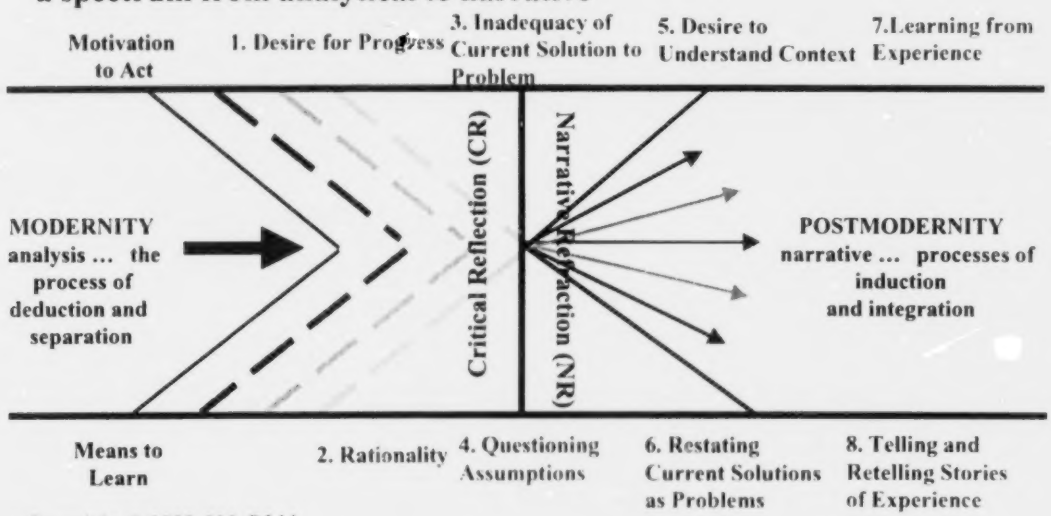
Working with teams of educators in my resource development practice, I have learned that making meaning of experience requires viewing the world through two different lenses and then interpreting and merging the related images into a perceptual collage. This process reflects selected aspects of a flow of thought from modernity to postmodernity. Movement in the figure that follows this discussion reads from left to right through past, present, and future time, from analytical thinking and problem solving, to narrative thinking and storytelling. As we move along this spectrum from deductive to inductive modes of reasoning, our motivation to act changes. As our motivation to act changes, we tend to select different means for learning. Multiple interpretations of what is happening become more plausible than a single representation, a consequent recognition that derives in part from using different means to learn, or from accepting or not recognizing deterrents to learning.

The ebb and flow of movement from analytical to narrative does not privilege one form of thinking over the other. It suggests an ecology of learning (Bateson, 1980) that balances analytical thinking, more suited to problem solving, with narrative thinking, better suited to building relationships. Using the two modes of thought affords a researcher a more holistic, ecologically sound means for interpreting the meaning of experience.

Although I have drawn ***Figure 1. A flow of thought from modernity to postmodernity: a spectrum from analytical to narrative*** as two dimensional and directional in its representation of learning in a narrative field, I want to emphasize that the analytical and narrative processes described are recursive and non-linear. They represent four possible cycles of action, reflection/refraction, and learning: 1+CR+2, 3+CR+4, 5+NR+6, and 7+NR+8. Action is an integral part of both life experience and narrative. Reflection is an analytical process, and refraction, a narrative process, that both contribute to learning. "All significant experiential learning is a change in a learner – a change in behavior, in interpretation, in autonomy, in creativity, or in any combination of the types of change" (Cell, 1984, 28). The significance of individual changes in an organizational context relates to how the changes might prompt action with potential to impact advancement toward achieving a mission and related goals.

Within this narrative interpretation, cycles of action, reflection/refraction, and learning occur. The cycles prompt (1) questioning; (2) renewed enactment; (3) narration of experience as a form of reflection in relationship to the experience of others, connecting that experience to the self and to fragments of a narrative whole; and (4) patterned initiation of linguistic communication cycles of storytelling and retelling. When we tell others what has happened, and we listen to their responses and to our own voice, we are using narrative processes as a way of reflecting upon experience. Very often past experience informs the present in a way that empowers us to learn better ways of mapping what to do in the future. In this way narrative helps us frame for action.

Figure 1. The flow of thought from modernity to postmodernity: a spectrum from analytical to narrative


Motivation to Act
1. Desire for Progress
3. Inadequacy of Current Solution to Problem
5. Desire to Understand Context
7.Learning from Experience
MODERNITY analysis ... the process of deduction and separation
Critical Reflection (CR)
Narrative Refraction (NR)
POSTMODERNITY narrative ... processes of induction and integration
Means to Learn
2. Rationality
4. Questioning Assumptions
6. Restating Current Solutions as Problems
8. Telling and Retelling Stories of Experience

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How We Value Our Experience and the Experience of Others

Experience is the raw material from which we construct meaning; it is an unpredictable text in a continuous state of flux. Our experience influences our interpretation of and interaction with the world in ways that contribute to learning (Cell, 1984; Schon, 1987). Once narrated, experience becomes a text that embodies potential for multiple interpretations of its content and context. Stories are "a way of exploring possible worlds out of the context of immediate need" (Bruner, 1986, 123).

Interpreting experience as both potential content and context for learning implies a particular view of learning in organizations in which action, reflection upon the experience of acting, and learning from experience have become recognized as a pre-eminent organizational learning strategy (Watkins and Marsick, 1993). This view implies an intrinsically narrative nature of organizations. Our need to understand the relationships among individuals engaged in learning is implicit in Senge's (1990) challenge that a team or group, rather than an individual, has become the learning unit of an organization (Kasl, Marsick, and Dechant, 1997).

As human development theorists have pointed out, individuals embody a capacity to change from *within* to the extent that they are able to access experience (Kegan, 1994). When experience is pooled in a group, the likelihood increases that change will happen. Accessing experience requires taking action, reflecting upon that action, assessing its potential implications, and learning from it by imagining other possibilities. Organizational experience shapes and is shaped by individuals as learners and as group participants whose frameworks of belief and values becomes more clear as they work, narrate experience, and learn together.

Narrative captures experience in any environmental context. Boje (1994) and Czarniawska (1997) suggest that narrative processes play an important role in organizations. They imply what Revelas and Razik (1998) write, that not all organizations can be understood fully by using only a diagnostic view since contradictory elements continually enter any system. Within any organization, "the major mode of communication, in purely statistical terms, is in fact narrative" (Cznarniawska, 1997, 21). What organizational narratives do is to capture the nomadic quality of *becoming* as opposed to *being*. "The function of the story is to find an intentional state that mitigates or at least makes comprehensible a deviation from a canonical cultural pattern" (Bruner, 1990, 49-50). If this assertion is correct, then organizational stories chronicle cultural shifts, and organizational storytellers create new ways of acting. "It is the storytellers who construct the categories-in-use, the frames-in-use, the histories-in-use, and the capitalism-in-use in their discipline and governance of organizational learning" (Boje, 1994, 434-435).

How We Use Language to Interpret Experience and to Construct Meaning

How we use language as a learning tool reflects how we view the world. How we interpret experience to make meaning of what happens constitutes learning from experience (Cell, 1984). First experiencing, and then interpreting what happens, enables us to understand our reality. Theorists in disciplines as diverse as adult learning, communication, narrative, and psychology emphasize the centrality of language to learning and meaning making. Some theorists interpret learning as a collaborative process that occurs in dialogue (Senge, 1990).

A constructivist epistemology espouses using language to acquire knowledge about the world. It assumes a difference between *representation* of reality and *construction* of reality through interpretative processes that focus upon experience. Two different ways of using language are representational and interpretative (Bagnall, 1999). Representational language attempts to re-present reality in a way that represents the truth. A modernist sensibility espouses using language in a representational way to mirror reality. This kind of thinking tends to be convergent, analytical, and deductive. It is well suited to solving problems, leading to what are perceived as correct solutions. On the other hand, a postmodernist uses language interpretatively (*Ibid.*). Interpretative language acknowledges that there is no single reality to re-present and constructs story. An interpretation itself becomes a reality within a framework of beliefs and values that emanate from a narrator's life experience in linguistically mediated contexts

Narrative provides a means for conceptualizing, structuring, and presenting interpretations of individual, group, and organizational experience (Czarniawska, 1997). Using linguistic processes in narrative ways holds potential to contribute to learning (Bruner, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1988). However, "In contrast to our vast knowledge of how science and logical reasoning proceed, we know precious little in any formal sense about how to make good stories" (Bruner, 1986, 14). Contributing to this lack of understanding about narrative processes may be the complexity that story must construct simultaneously a "landscape of action" via a "story grammar" and a "landscape of consciousness," what the actors "know, think or feel, or do not know, think or feel" (*Ibid.*).

Organizational narrative processes, including storytelling and re-telling, move from the particularities of one concurrent story to the next. They interpret meaning through themes, patterns, and referents that occur. The constructivist intellectual tradition "argues that experience doesn't happen to us; we make experience. Events happen to us, but we make experience by interpreting events" (Brookfield, 1995, 182). A constructivist assumes that an individual and a group learn how to learn by experiencing recursive cycles of enactment, followed by critical interpretation of what happened, taking action again, and reinterpreting it for its meaning on another level.

How the Nature of Research Has Changed

A view of the nature of research as dialogical and collaborative flows naturally from the preceding interpretations of knowing and learning, experience, and language use (Mishler, 1986, 1990). In this conceptual framework, a researcher is no longer the knower or the voice of authority. A researcher and participants become co-researchers and co-learners. A primary human attribute, narrative knowing is a methodology for the human

sciences (Polkinghorne, 1988). Through narrative inquiry, perspectives of a narrator become more meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit (Cresswell, 1994).

Narrative inquiry appears to be one of the "new tools for inquiry" (Revelas and Razik, 1998, 135-136), a reflective strategy to promote learning and change from *within*, both within an *individual* and within an *organization*. In using it I have interpreted narration and interview as discourse (Senge, 1990).

Research Question

Can the application of this research model to conduct a narrative inquiry advance our understanding of how an organization learns to change and how narrative processes contribute to that process?

Research Design and Methodology

Narrative is both the research methodology and the subject of this study. My choice of narrative inquiry to interpret the meaning of stories of experience of nine participants engaged in learning how to change seems appropriate for several reasons. First of all, I am interested in examining not only the *what*, but also the *how* of what has happened. Variables cannot be identified easily, and the topic requires examination and exploration in a natural setting. Narratives, the centerpiece of this examination of narrative processes, "are a valuable transformative tool. They allow us to communicate new ideas to others, and to discover new meanings by assimilating experiences into narrative schema" (Gudmundsdottir, 1995, 34).

Narrative inquiry aids us in understanding the "storied" nature of life experience. It is a natural, human approach, for humans exhibit "protolinguistic" readiness to organize experience narratively (Bruner, 1990, 67). Narrative inquiry offers a compatible way to study narrative processes (Reason and Hawkins, 1988). I have used the methodology to study how narrative thinking has contributed to learning how to change for professionals committed to learning from their experience in higher education. Public consensual acknowledgment, achieved through extended dialogue about how uncontrollable, changing contextual variables have rendered some traditional practices and beliefs inadequate, has contributed to their desire and capacity to learn from experience.

In designing this methodology, I aligned the research method with the research purpose to access the meaning and implications of the participants' experience. I wanted to focus on both the singularity and similarity of their experience of learning how to change by using a holistic, collaborative approach.

Preparing for Collaborative Research

Although I am a knower in my own professional setting, as co-researcher and co-learner with study participants in an unfamiliar setting, I relinquished that status. I wanted to listen to *their* voices and to focus on how *they* used language to create meaning. From my practice I understood the need for collaboration and the extent to which both context and the experience of others inform collaborative learning. I laid groundwork for interviewing during several visits to the field. During the visits I met with the learning group to observe their interaction, to discuss mutual research interests, and to tour the campuses. This fieldwork contributed to developing trust with study participants, who then felt more comfortable to speak willingly and honestly in interviews. My field experience also contextualized the methodology before I used it in the research setting.

Drawing Upon Several Research Traditions and Data Collection Techniques

Combining several traditions of inquiry -- case study, ethnography, phenomenography, and phenomenology, -- strengthens this study. To study a unique, revelatory case with organizational boundaries requires in-depth description and holistic interpretation that derives from narrative inquiry. The methodology uses ethnographic techniques and multiple sources of information within the field of the case (Cresswell, 1998). It encompasses inductive reasoning, heuristic possibilities for generating new understanding, "thick" description encompassing vast amounts of data, and the particularistic nature of each participant (Merriam, 1988). The study is phenomenographic in that it describes the meaning of the lived experiences of nine individuals engaged in the phenomenon of learning how to change (Marton and Booth, 1997). It relies upon phenomenological practices with participants reading and responding to stories to ensure they are trustworthy interpretations of their experience.

This methodology employs four data collection techniques: interview, observation, document analysis, and journaling. Interview is the heart of the research design. I have conducted three two-hour interviews with each of

nine participants. I have used data from observation, document analysis, and journaling to augment the voices of the participants, who have told me almost two hundred stories that lay embedded in their interview texts.

Piloting the Interview Protocol

When I piloted the interview protocol, I was uncertain and hesitant to risk asking only one question during the first of three two-hour interviews. My approach was to lead a participant through a process of deconstruction, to move away from institutional culture and language toward a personal perspective. In my first two pilots, I encouraged each participant to interpret experience using her own voice. When we reached a point of apparent readiness, I said, "Tell me the story of your experience of learning how to change." I had prepared a series of prompts to encourage story flow. What I learned from these pilots was that when a researcher asks a participant about something that is meaningful, a story of that experience tells itself with minimal prompting if the researcher does not interrupt the natural flow of a participant's narrative thinking.

Since I had considered my research role to be that of an active learner and co-researcher with the participants, and because I wanted to understand change from *within*, I conducted a third pilot of the methodology by simulating the process with myself. This simulation gave me better understanding of what a participant might experience during narrative inquiry. The self-pilot offered me a means for becoming more self-aware of the meaning of participating in narrative inquiry. It gave me better understanding of the implications of the process in which I had planned to engage others. It helped me internalize the extent to which narrative research prompts learning in a way that I had not experienced before. I learned the extent to which this kind of linguistic exchange reaches into subconscious memory, connecting elements of experience in new and meaningful ways through telling and retelling, through interpretation of that text, and through increased self-awareness of one's own learning processes, the narrative processes inherent in the methodology.

In this way the methodology itself began to emerge as a narrative. My learning from the first two pilots informed my self-pilot; my learning from the self-pilot informed my first set of interviews; and each subsequent set of interviews continued to inform the next. Throughout the process, even though it has been collaborative, I have had to acknowledge my privileged position as the one person who has had access to all of the data.

Learning How to Present Data as Story

Collecting a body of concurrent stories from participants in an organization yields a panorama of interpretations of what is happening. Such a collection offers a potential critique of the dominant discourse or public narrative advanced and espoused by the organization (Brooks 1998). A challenge to the methodological design was how to lift stories of everyday events from interview texts, sculpting them to amplify participants' voices so that the stories resonate with their memories. When storied interpretations of individual experience ring true, they juxtapose varied perceptions of events that are trustworthy for a local culture. They attest to what each teller "believes in" rather than what each "believes that" (Ricoeur, 1981, 21). Reciprocal modification of the *self* by the *other*, and vice versa, contributes to increasing self-awareness and learning; to challenging previous conceptions; to risking confusion and disruption; and to increasing the possibility for change (Schaafsma, 1993, xi)

In addition to acknowledging multiple interpretations of a text, narrative inquiry also "pays attention to the forms in which knowledge is cast and the effects that these have on an audience" (Czarniawska, 1998, 6). Different genres produce different effects. Stories told within organizational cultures are "mental models" (Senge, 1990), or guides for action. Stories of experience become seeds from which new theories and practices can grow, for narrative draws upon memory, connecting conscious and subconscious, as well as past, present and future time.

Summarizing the Research Model and Process

The following two tables provide a template of this narrative research model:

Table 1. Narrative Analysis

Analytic Sequence	Focus of Analysis	Process and Output
A. Narrative Analysis	What are the stories being told?	Tell the stories of the participants, using first person voice, lifting them from the interview text, and using text to title each. Write them as a form of creative

		non-fiction, using quotation marks and traditional narrative format. Give individual repertories of stories to participants to read for trustworthiness and versimilitude and to determine the extent to which they hear their own voices. Revise collaboratively as appropriate.
B. Interpretative Analysis	What is the meaning of the stories in the form of emergent themes?	Identify the themes of each story paying attention to those elements of the story related to learning, narrative, and change. Summarize data on worksheets.
	What is the meaning of the themes in the form of emergent patterns?	Theme the themes to identify patterns, paying attention, for example, to what repeats itself, the nature of the patterns, how to describe related differences, what circumstances prompt the patterns, and what the repetitions mean. Group stories according to emergent patterns for presentation. Summarize data on worksheets.
	What are the referents that occur?	Identify key words that are not themes, but are meaningful to participants. Use data from observations, document analysis, and journaling to clarify the meaning of such referents and to augment the interview stories with observation, document analysis and journaling for clarity for first time readers being introduced to the study.
C. Interrogative Analysis	1. How do professionals, working individually and as group participants in a contemporary organizational context, use narrative processes as part of their effort to learn how to change?	Determine the extent to which the complete repertory of stories that contextualize each other contributes to answering the research questions of the study. Summarize on worksheets to use in writing the findings of the study.
	2. What kinds of narrative processes do they use?	
	3. What conditions influence their use of narrative processes?	
	4. How and to what extent do they perceive that narrative processes contribute to their learning?	
	5. How and to what extent do they perceive that narrative processes contribute to their capacity to change?	
	6. What kinds of individual, group, and organizational change do narrative processes influence?	
	7. Are there other findings unaccounted for by these questions?	

As I have written and analyzed the stories, I have tacked back and forth between narrative and theoretical analyses, asking myself, "Does this story confirm, contradict, or augment what theorists have said?" Because this study focuses on how framing for action happens, in my literature review I interpreted selected content from each body of theory as a series of action statements. The following table summarizes key concepts of narrative theory and experiential learning theory that I have compared with the emergent, concurrent narratives. Once I have completed this comparison, I will revise my preliminary findings and conceptual framework as appropriate.

Table 2. Theoretical Data Analysis

Body of Theory	Theoretical Concept	Interpretation of Data
A. Narrative	Narrative structures thought and experience to create reality.	Identify textual passages and stories that confirm, contradict, and/or augment the theory. Summarize on worksheets to use in writing the findings of the study.
	Narrative interprets life experience as action.	
	Narrative contributes to the construction of both individual and communal identity.	
	Narrative provides a way to reflect upon experience.	
	Narrative creates meaning and generates knowledge from experience.	

B. Experiential Learning	Experience functions as a moving force that is a starting point for learning and for changing behavior.	Identify textual passages and stories that confirm, contradict, and/or augment the theory. Summarize on worksheets to use in writing the findings of the study.
	Reflecting critically upon experience to discover its meaning provides us with a way to learn from experience by reinterpreting past experience.	
	Dialogue creates space to reflect critically upon experience with others and to examine processes of analysis and interpretation.	
	Socio-cultural context informs both dialogue and learning.	
	Learning that is meaningful frequently leads to change in behavior, in interpretation, in autonomy, in creativity, or in a combination of these changes.	

Implicit in building this research model for narrative inquiry is a logic that has required me to dance back and forth between analytical and narrative thinking. This dance also characterizes the process of analysis and synthesis that I have described. The model respects both the singularity and similarity of the experience of each participant in learning how to change. It also attempts to encourage their use of both analytical and narrative thinking during our inquiry. The text of the interviews drives the first part, writing the stories. Then the stories drive the analytic process. Finally the theory provides a counterpoint to assess what we have learned.

Results and Findings

Preliminary findings suggest that this research model advances our understanding of how an organization learns to change and how narrative processes contribute to such learning. By applying this systematic narrative methodology, my analysis of the study seems to be unfolding in much the same narrative way that the participants' stories have emerged. It is possible that I have experienced how pre-existing narrative schema pattern our thoughts to a greater extent than we realize (Bruner, 1986). I have found it beneficial to respect an inherent narrative structure of what has happened, both in the research setting and while using this methodology. One analytical key to unlocking the meaning of the data is to continually interpret narrative flow as it happens, moving from one story to another in much the same way as a painter changes colors on a brush. The stories are there, waiting to be lifted from the interview text; the art is to foster their emergence. It requires a light touch and a tough mindedness of multi-tasking that I had not anticipated. Having this template to follow, however, has made my task not only doable, but also enjoyable since the emergent narratives hold surprises and learning. I have experienced for the first time the "promise of narrative research" (Brooks, 1998) and creative potential of case study.

Contribution to New Knowledge in HRD

We will achieve the promise of narrative research (Brooks, 1998) only *when* we use various approaches to narrative inquiry in other singular contexts that share some similarities with the research setting of this study, and *if* we continue retelling our stories about what happens during the process of narrative inquiry. Therefore, I have presented this research methodology *not* to imply that: (1) it is the only way to examine narrative processes, (2) this model is a finished product that achieves an ideal without limitations, or (3) other existing studies have not been based on sound research models and techniques. This model is a time intensive narrative work in progress, a work being informed both by my learning from the experience of using it and by my academic training in American and English literature. It is but one approach among others chronicled by Price (1999).

I have written this paper as a call to contribute to new knowledge in HRD by using narrative inquiry more frequently in organizational settings. I have emphasized (1) the extent to which the singularity of any narrative inquiry requires a researcher to approach a study creatively (a) by adapting existing research models and strategies and (b) by developing new ones as the narrative process of research unfolds; (2) the significance of interpreting narrative processes and their implications for learning how to change in an organizational context; and (3) the application of what appears to be a new model for conducting narrative inquiry.

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